GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:291
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2000
PRICES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES
HARIBHAI PARTHIBHAI CHAUDHARY

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the difference between wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities in the metropolitan cities;

(b) whether any guidelines have been issued in regard to the maximum permissible difference between the prices of essential commodities in wholesale and retail markets; (

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the manner in which the Government monitors the retail prices of essential commodities in order to protect consumers?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 291 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 8.12.2000.

(a) : A statement showing the wholesale and retail prices of selected essential commodities as on 29.11.2000 at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta is given in the Annexure.

(b) & (c): Wholesale and retail prices are determined by market forces of supply and demand. There are no specific guidelines issued by the Government of India for maximum difference permissible between wholesale and retail prices. However, for those essential commodities, which are supplied through Public Distribution System (PDS) issue prices are prescribed by the Government. Any abnormal differences in the wholesale and retail prices, when noticed are dealt with at State and Central Government level by taking immediate appropriate corrective actions.

(d) : The retail and wholesale prices of 12 essential commodities of mass consumption are monitored regularly by the Central and State Governments at the highest level through various high powered committees. The meetings of the Joint Monitoring Committee of the Central and State Governments are held regularly to review the price situation. The daily retail prices and weekly wholesale prices of 12 selected essential commodities of mass consumption like rice, wheat, sugar, gram dal, arhar dal, groundnut oil, mustard oil, vanaspati, tea, onion, potato and salt are being monitored by the Price Monitoring Cell in the Department of Consumer Affairs. On the basis of the data on prices collected from 18 selected State Capitals and some major producing centres through State Civil Supplies Departments, necessary analysis is made and appropriate measures are taken to safeguard the interests of the consumers from time to time.

ANNEXURE

Statement referred to in reply to part (a) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 291 for answer on 8.12.2000

Wholesale and Retail Prices of Selected Essential Commodities in the Metropolitan Cities as on 29.11.2000

(Rs. per kg.)

Item	Delhi		Mumbai		Chennai		Calcutta	
	Wholesale	Retail	Wholesale	Retail	Wholesale	Retail	Wholesale	Retail

Rice	8.80	12.00	11.00	12.50	9.50	10.00	9.00	10.00
Wheat	6.35	7.00	9.08	10.50	9.00	11.00	N.R.	N.R.
Gram	21.50	24.00	23.00	25.00	22.00	24.00	22.50	24.00
Sugar	15.65	17.00	15.75	17.25	14.15	14.50	15.80	17.00
Tur	22.00	28.00	23.25	25.00	24.00	26.00	22.00	26.00
Groundnut oil+	55.67	76.00	33.00@	40.00	32.50	36.00	48.00	66.00
Mustard oil	35.33	42.00	N.R.	66.00	N.R.	N.R.	35.25	36.00
Vanaspati	31.33	33.00	29.33	36.00	27.00	30.00	31.33	35.00
Onion	5.60	9.00	5.50	9.00	6.00	8.00	8.00	11.00
Potato	3.80	6.00	3.75	5.50	3.00	4.00	2.40	5.00
Tea (loose)	100.00	115.00	N.R.	130.00	116.00	120.00	N.R.	70.00
Salt	4.60	6.00	5.50	7.00	5.20	6.00	N.R.	7.00

(packed)

Source: State Civil Supplies Departments. @ The Economic Times
Note: Wholesale prices are originally reported per quintal and have been converted to Rs. per kg.

+ Retail prices relate to premium brand of 1 kg in Delhi and Calcutta and Wholesale prices are in respect of 15 kg. tin in general brand. In Mumbai and Chennai, retail as well as wholesale prices pertain to loose variety.

N.R. - Not Reported